



L & B Recycling

November 2, 2005

Introduction

A citizen living near L&B Recycling, Inc. in Newton County, Georgia, submitted a request for a public health assessment to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to determine whether exposures to contaminants from the facility pose a health hazard. Under a cooperative agreement with ATSDR, the Georgia Division of Public Health (GDPH) conducted an investigation to address the citizen's concerns. The citizen states that the community suffers from smoke, foul odors, contaminated storm water run off, mosquitoes, rats, and surface water and soil contamination as a result of facility operations.

Site Description and History

L&B Recycling is located in Covington, Georgia, approximately 30 miles east of Atlanta, Georgia. The population within 1 mile of L&B Recycling is approximately 2,800 people. It began current operations in 1990, and has historically been used for various commercial and light industrial operations including auto salvage, gas distribution and welding.

L&B Recycling processes mixed source scrap metal wastes in order to reclaim useable metals for recycling and sale. Scrap stock includes former underground storage tanks, 55-gallon steel drums, electrical components, batteries, etc. Currently, the facility does not accept any containers unless they are empty. Two buildings are located on-site that are used for storage and office space. The remaining four-plus acres consist almost entirely of recyclable debris. The only chemical stored on site is fuel for the equipment. L&B Recycling is restricted from accepting, storing, handling, or disposing of hazardous waste at the site. The site has limited access: a barrier and/or fence surrounds approximately 75% of the facility, excluding the western boundary of the property along the creek. Access to the site from along the Creek is extremely difficult and considered trespassing. There is no indication or reports of individuals accessing the site or creek in this area.

L&B Recycling is approximately five acres in an area of mixed light industrial, commercial, and residential use. There are approximately ten similar facilities in the

immediate area. The site is bordered to the north by several businesses, to the west by a small creek that is an unnamed tributary of the Yellow River, and to the south and east by Washington Street and residences. The nearest residence is adjacent to the site to the south.

Residents living near L&B Recycling get their water from a municipal or other public source, supplied by surface water. The nearest public drinking water intake is approximately three miles from L&B Recycling on the Yellow River. Municipal water has been available and used by residents for several decades. The nearest individual water well is at the adjacent property, but has not been used for consumption for at least two years.

Environmental Sampling

Results for five limited surface soil samples collected from the nearest residence in 2001 indicate that PCB (Aroclor 1242) and lead are present in surface soils above levels of health concern. Because Aroclor 1242 has not been found on site, and lead is commonly found in soil from many sources, the presence of these contaminants cannot be fully attributed to site-related activities.

In 2000, two sediment samples were taken: from the center of the western edge of the site that may contain sediment transported from the site, and a background sample from the northwest corner of the site in the most upstream accessible location. No contaminants were found in sediment above levels of health concern. Regarding air quality, based on facility operations, professional knowledge about similar facilities, and the data available from inspection reports conducted regularly at the facility since it began operations, it is not suspected of releasing emissions that could cause or contribute to chronic health problems.

Results

To summarize the frequency of contaminants found, arsenic was found above the average background levels in:

- One of six off-site soil samples
- Two of six sediment samples



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The level of arsenic in soil that triggers a requirement to notify GEPD is 41 ppm, and the state and federal cleanup level for arsenic in soil is 20 ppm. Arsenic levels found in all off-site soil and sediment samples are below all state and federal regulatory standards.

Lead was found above average background levels in:

- Four of six off-site soil samples
- Two of six sediment samples

The level of lead found in one off-site soil sample (2,200 ppm) exceeds the state regulatory level of 400 ppm.

Conclusions

GDPH has determined that L&B Recycling poses ***no apparent public health hazard***. Human exposure to contaminated media occurred in the past, but the exposure was below a level of health hazard.

Recommendations

Because of the elevated levels of lead found in one sample and PCB 1242 in two samples taken from the nearest residence, in May 2003, delineation and remediation of off-site soil contaminated with PCB and lead is planned as outlined in a Consent Order issued by GEPD. The property will likely be cleaned up to Type 2 Soil Criteria for residential properties because there is no indication that the contamination is widespread or the "hot spots" are repeatedly accessed by young children.